



# *APD NEWS*

Public Information Office: (512) 974-5017

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 25, 2009**

**Contact:** Public Information Office, 974-5017

### **Austin Police Department Holiday Tips for Shoppers**

Tis the season to be jolly, but it's also the season to take extra precautions against car thieves. Thieves will be dashing through stores and shopping center parking lots looking for vehicles full of newly purchased presents. To make sure your gifts wind up in the right hands and that you have a sleigh to deliver them in, hide anything of value, lock your car, and take the keys.

Auto thieves shop the easy way by stealing gifts, purses, wallets, packages and other valuables left in plain view inside vehicles. Within seconds, a thief can steal your items, identity and sometimes even your car. Texas drivers need to understand that leaving items in plain view for thieves makes their job much easier.

During the holiday season the Auto Theft Interdiction Project and the APD District Representatives will be walking through parking lots and looking through vehicle windows. They will place a "Crime Prevention Notice" (which looks similar to a parking ticket) under the windshield wiper to help educate owners about their need to protect themselves against vehicle burglary.

APD reminds us to protect our vehicles during this busy holiday season by taking precautions that will make them less of a target:

- Lock Your Car and take your keys – Don't make it easier for the thief to enter your vehicle
- Park in well-lit areas – over half all vehicle thefts occur at night
- Don't leave valuables in plain view – don't make your car a more desirable target and attract thieves by leaving valuables in plain sight.

Additionally during the holiday season, citizens need to be cautious when looking for the best deals on the internet. The APD Auto Theft Interdiction Project has been working several cases in which citizens used the internet to purchase a vehicle or vehicle parts, only to find out they were stolen.



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The APD Auto Theft Interdiction Project programs are funded through the Texas Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority part of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicle to reduce auto and burglary theft in the State of Texas.

**Media Advisory:** On Friday, November 27, 2009 the Central West District Representative Unit will be at the Highland Mall Parking lot from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. placing crime prevention notices on vehicle windows.

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